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**PRESS RELEASE**

**U.S. CYCLONE RELIEF DUBBED “OPERATION SEA ANGEL II”**

*U.S. Officials Meet with Adviser Tapan Chowdhury, General Moeen to Discuss On-Going Relief Efforts*

**DHAKA, DECEMBER 2, 2007** – The U.S. Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. to Bangladesh, Geeta Pasi, announced the name for the U.S. operation to assist Bangladesh in the wake of Cyclone Sidr: Operation Sea Angel II. The name symbolizes the continuity of the U.S. partnership with Bangladesh following the 1991 cyclone and the intention to work together as Bangladesh recovers and rebuilds from this recent tragedy.

The Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. and Brigadier General Ronald L. Bailey held meetings today with Bangladesh’s Food and Disaster Management Adviser, Tapan Chowdhury, and Army Chief of Staff General Moeen U. Ahmed to discuss the progress of the ongoing relief operations. In these discussions, the parties discussed planning for the coming days.

At a press briefing today, Chargé d’Affaires, a.i. Pasi and General Bailey emphasized that the departure of the U.S. military personnel engaged in the cyclone relief operations would not indicate an end to U.S. engagement, but would only mark a shift from immediate relief to a longer-term cooperation to help Bangladesh with its recovery and reconstruction efforts. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), which will spearhead U.S. efforts in this area, is currently preparing a medium- and long-term program to assist the affected areas in recovering from the effects of the cyclone. This plan will be based on priorities identified by the Bangladesh government.

U.S. officials also confirmed at the press briefing that the USS Tarawa would be replacing the USS Kearsarge. The Tarawa will be conducting a transition with the Kearsarge, after which the Kearsarge would depart. The officials emphasized that the U.S. would continue providing the relief requested by the government, and that although the names of the ships might be changing, the overall capacity to assist Bangladesh would remain the same.

For further information, please see the U.S. Embassy Dhaka website’s Cyclone Sidr Relief page, [www.dhaka.usembassy.gov/cyclone sidr.html](http://www.dhaka.usembassy.gov/cyclone_sidr.html), or contact the Public Affairs Office of the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka.

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